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Celebrity Buzz

Gallagher used to be a 'hooligan'

pg 14

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Workology

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pg 10

Now it's rain and flood warnings

WEATHER Put away the snow boots and break out the galoshes.

The warm and wet frontal system that hit B.C.'s south coast yesterday morning will swell local creeks and rivers and could potentially flood city streets.

The Lower Mainland will receive up to 100 millimetres of rain in 48 hours. The Fraser Valley will get even more rain, up to 150 millimetres over the same period. A rainfall warning for both areas was issued yesterday by Environment Canada.

Warming temperatures, combined with the rain, are expected to melt low-elevation snow and add a considerable amount of runoff to streams and rivers.

Lowland rivers in the Fraser Valley, including the Hatzic, Nicomekl and Serpentine, could approach flood levels, according to a high stream-flow advisory issued by B.C.'s River Forecast Centre on Monday.

Larger rivers like the Chilliwack, Stave, Coquitlam and Seymour will peak about mid-morning today. They are not expected to flood.

In Vancouver, about 800 city workers have spent the last two days clearing snow from the city's 40,000 storm drains.

Surrey warned of possible road closures today in low-lying areas.

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Please recycle

Change tenancy act: MLA

Vancouver man cashes in by 'exploiting system' to sublet condos to students

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

The province needs to amend its Residential Tenancy Act after a Vancouver man admitted to subletting his one-bedroom apartment to five international students to make a profit, says one local MLA.

David Messina, who has sublet several condo units in Vancouver, is not paying his landlord rent, and some of his former sublet tenants say he's never returned their deposits.

Jenny Kwan, NDP MLA for Vancouver-Mount Pleasant, said yesterday that Messina is "exploiting the system" and the Ministry of Housing needs to amend any loopholes in the act that allow this kind of situation.

"Subletting in and of itself to re-rent, there's nothing wrong with that in most instances," Kwan said.

"But people usually don't do it … as a business, and this instance is injuring both the landlord and the tenants."

Elisabeth Fox, who owns the 570-square-foot condo, told CBC News that Messina hasn't paid his $1,500 rent in months and when the Residential Tenancy Board (RTB) tried to evict him, he appealed the decision, buying more time.

According to RTB records, Messina was evicted from two other apartments — where he had also been subletting the suite — for not paying rent.

Messina, who has a criminal record that includes fraud, told CBC News that he makes about $1.2 million a year in his sublet operation.

Vancouver police Const. Jana McGuiness said because Messina isn't breaking a law, their hands are tied.

Kwan said if the government were to amend the act to forbid subletting for profit and attach penalties to the act, it would protect landlords like Fox and the sublet tenants.

One of the sublet tenants, Hyojin Jang, told CBC News that students like him are vulnerable to this kind of situation because they have limited English skills and money, and they don't know their rights.

ShareYourViews
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Dine Out Vancouver **Yew'll like it**

KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Rafael Gonzalez, executive chef at Yew Restaurant and Bar at the Four Seasons Hotel, shows one of the dishes on the eatery's Dine Out Vancouver menu yesterday. His is one of 193 local establishments participating in the annual event that starts Jan. 14. Story, page 3

KRISTEN THOMPSON

Blaze hits Gastown heritage building

NO INJURIES Around 20 residents of a four-storey heritage building in Gastown were evacuated from their homes yesterday after an early morning fire.

Firefighters have yet to determine what caused the blaze on Alexander Street, but it likely started in the building's ground-floor restaurant, called Incendio Pizzeria.

Around 40 firefighters fought the blaze, which spread from the ground floor to the third.

Fire Chief Gabe Roder said no one was injured, but there was a substantial amount of damage — mostly to the restaurant.

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Fuel spills into Fraser River
A diesel fuel leak at the CN rail yard in Surrey spilled into the nearby Fraser River before it was contained. According to CN's Kelli Svendson, environmental authorities are still trying to determine how much fuel spilled into the river and how much damage was done. CKNW.COM

Local

BCSPCA Speaking for Animals

Surrey SPCA robbed again

Workers and volunteers arrived at the B.C. SPCA Surrey branch yesterday morning to find a window was smashed and about $1,600 in cash stolen. This is the third time the shelter has been broken into in the last eight months, but it's the first time the administration office has been hit. On the two previous occasions, rabbits – some still under veterinary care – were stolen. None of the animals have been recovered. METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

CAVE-IN A storage warehouse in Burnaby collapsed under the weight of rain and snow. No one was injured.

GUN A 30-year-old man was shot on the Downtown Eastside and taken to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries yesterday. Police say they believe the man was targeted. METRO NEWS SERVICES

metronews.ca
WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Nanotechnology creates smell-free socks and germ-free toilets at **metronews.ca/canada**

Video Jim Flaherty previews budget measures to boost the economy at **metronews.ca/canada**

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Please recycle

Quinn looking to coach Team Canada in 2010

JEFF HODSON
jeff.hodson@metronews.ca

With back-to-back gold medals at the 2008 under-18 and 2009 world junior hockey championships, Vancouver's Big Irishman is chaffing at the cuff for another shot to coach Team Canada at home in 2010.

"Would I like a crack at something to do during the Olympics? You bet," said Pat Quinn, beaming, but tired, as he arrived at Vancouver's airport yesterday.

Quinn coached Canada's Olympic men's team to a gold medal in 2002 and to a disappointing quarter-final elimination in 2006. He said he'd relish any involvement in 2010.

"As I've said many times, if they want me to carry the bags, the sticks, sharpen skates or coach, I'd be glad to do any of them."

Quinn, who hadn't gone to bed since winning gold in Ottawa on Monday night, described the experience as a "thrilling ride."

"It's such an awesome treat," he added. "There's nothing that you could imagine that matches standing there, watching your flag go up after winning the gold."

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Pat Quinn displays his world junior hockey championship medal at Vancouver International Airport yesterday.

Lift your spirits and Dine Out Vancouver

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

One of the city's most anticipated annual culinary events begins next week, and 40,000 people have already taken a sneak peak online at the menus for this year's Dine Out Vancouver.

"People ... say Vancouver's dining scene is one of the best in the world."
Rick Antonson

Reservations for Dine Out Vancouver, which lets foodies dine at high-end restaurants for low-end prices, are being taken at 193 establishments around the city.

Participating outlets offer three-course menus for the fixed prices of $18, $28 and $38 from Jan. 14 to Feb. 1.

Rick Antonson, president and CEO of Tourism Vancouver, said this is the event's biggest year to date.

"We started with 57 restaurants seven years ago," he said.

"People (from abroad) say Vancouver's dining scene is one of the best in the world. When the world celebrates it, we should as well."

Rafael Gonzalez, executive chef at Yew Restaurant and Bar at the Four Seasons Hotel, said Dine Out Vancouver gives diners and restaurants something to look forward to during drizzly January.

"It gets your name out there, especially (during) one of the slowest times of the year," he said.

Check online

- For a list of participating restaurants, visit tourismvancouver.ca

Canadians stuck in Gaza for at least one more day
A number of Canadians will have to wait at least another day in the Gaza Strip because of unsafe conditions before they can make their way into Israel, officials say. Canadian officials and Israeli authorities are working to find a safer departure time. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada

Drive-thrus hit speed bump

City council in St. John's, N.L., has passed a bylaw making it harder for restaurants to open new drive-thrus in that city. The onus will now be on restaurant operators to prove to the city's traffic department that lineups from any new drive-thru will not spill out onto city streets and cause traffic problems.
METRO NEWS SERVICES

Semrau appears at military hearing into shooting death

A witness reported seeing Capt. Robert Semrau fire at a severely injured, unarmed Taliban fighter after an ambush in October, a military hearing was told yesterday.

A synopsis of events introduced at the hearing and agreed upon by the military prosecution and defence lawyers provided the first detailed glimpse of the circumstances that led to the 35-year-old Canadian Forces officer being charged with second-degree murder.

It was read at a hearing into whether Semrau, a member of the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Canadian Regiment, should be released from custody until he stands trial. Military judge Lt.-Col. Louis-Vincent d'Auteuil reserved his decision until today.

Capt. Robert Semrau, front, is escorted by military police after a bail hearing at CFB Petawawa, Ont., yesterday.

The charge has provoked controversy because it was laid more than two months after the death of the Taliban fighter in Afghanistan's Helmand province on Oct. 19.

According to the statement, Semrau was the only soldier in the "proximity" of the wounded insurgent when two shots were heard. The hearing was told that a witness will testify later he saw Semrau fire at the Taliban fighter, who had already been disarmed.

Prosecutor Maj. Marylene Trudel said the Taliban fighter's body was never recovered.

The prosecution believes Semrau fired both shots, killing the wounded insurgent without lawful justification, Trudel said. This is the first time a criminal charge has been laid against a Canadian soldier in Afghanistan involving the death of an alleged enemy fighter.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

New group created to tackle credit crunch

ECONOMY A new working group of bank and government officials is being asked to immediately begin looking at ways to make loans more accessible to Canadian consumers and business, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said yesterday.

Jim Flaherty

"We all have responsibilities to ensure that the financial system functions properly in support of the Canadian economy and certainly the government has a role to play in that. I encourage the heads of banks, the CEOs, to work with the government," he said before heading into pre-budget consultations.

It was Flaherty's first comment on a meeting he and Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney held behind closed doors with bank CEOs in Toronto on Monday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CUPE proposal called anti-Semitic

BOYCOTT A proposal by the president of the largest union in the province to boycott Israeli academics at Ontario universities is being labelled as anti-Semitic and an affront to civil liberties by prominent members of Canada's Jewish community.

"CUPE has no business boycotting academics."
Avi Benlolo

"CUPE has no business boycotting academics, whether they are Israeli or Jewish," said Avi Benlolo, president of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center. "It goes against the grain of academia."

On Friday, CUPE Ontario president Sid Ryan called for the boycott of Israeli academics and educators who do not condemn the Dec. 29 bombing of the Islamic University in Gaza and "the assault on Gaza in general."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Talks scheduled in port dispute

NEGOTIATIONS Employers expect to respond Friday to the union's latest contract offer in talks aimed at avoiding a strike or lockout of dock foremen at Canada's Pacific Coast ports.

The threat of a work stoppage has hung over the ports since the beginning of the year, but the employers bargaining group remains cautiously optimistic a deal can be reached before any job action begins, a spokesman said yesterday.

The two sides would have to issue a 72-hour notice before launching a strike or lockout, and "neither has been inclined to do that as long as talks continue," said Greg Vurdela of the British Columbia Maritime Employers Association.

REUTERS

ShareYourViews
vancouverletters@metronews.ca

News in brief

SETTLEMENT The B.C. Human Rights Tribunal has ruled in favour of a woman whose supervisor offered her marijuana, lingerie and truck tires in return for sex. Kelowna's Kori Harrison, 27, was awarded $32,000 yesterday at the conclusion of the three-year hearing.

EDMONTON A man found guilty of the brutal slaying of 13-year-old Nina Courtepatte has won an appeal conviction. The Alberta Court of Appeal released a decision yesterday that states Joseph Laboucan will face another trial for the April 2005 rape and murder of Courtepatte, who was found dead on a golf course.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Ex-Nepali 'slave girls' demand rehabilitation
Hundreds of Nepali girls, rescued after being sold off by their poor parents as domestic help, marched in Kathmandu yesterday demanding rehabilitation-like jobs and an education, activists said. Traditionally girls as young as six from the ethnic Tharu community in five districts of west Nepal were "sold" by their parents for as little as 1,500 Nepali rupees ($20 US). REUTERS

World/Business

Mexico **Awareness tour**

HENRY ROMERO / REUTERS

Antonio Tomaselli, 30, rides his bike yesterday in Mexico City. Tomaselli started a bike tour eight months ago in northern Alaska, making his way through Canada and the United States, to bring attention to violence against women.

Indian PM slams Pakistani inaction

NEW DELHI Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh accused Pakistan yesterday of acting irresponsibly, saying November's Mumbai attacks must have had support from some of Pakistan's official agencies.

Pakistan rejected the accusation as unacceptable, saying India had begun a propaganda offensive and such charges jeopardized chances of co-operation against terrorism.

Singh's comments show New Delhi's growing frustration at what it sees as Islamabad's slowness at identifying and arresting the attack's planners.

India blames Pakistan militants for the organized strikes by 10 gunmen in November that killed 179 people. REUTERS

Business

Markets buck that gloomy feeling

Despite a seemingly endless tide of bad economic news and forecasts, Canadian stocks experienced a sixth straight day of gains yesterday.

The recent rally on the TSX has raised the index 14 per cent from its pre-Christmas woes.

Having closed yesterday at 9,472.09 points, the market lows of November (when the TSX dropped to 7,724.76 points) seem to be fading into the past.

On Monday, Canadian bank and commodity stocks led the way for a modest gain in the index. But those gains came on the same day Canadian automakers said sales had plunged 21.2 per cent.

Monday's gains on the TSX showed a growing pattern in recent weeks on both Bay and Wall streets: The markets seem to be rallying on days filled with poor economic data.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

More U.S. rallies

- Strength in the tech sector boosted U.S. stocks yesterday, overshadowing data showing slumping factory orders and dismal pending home sales.

Business in brief

TELECOM Rogers Communications Inc. posted strong wireless subscriber growth yesterday, but said its weak cable results point to a tough economy. Rogers said it added 199,000 net wireless subscribers in the fourth quarter, up from 183,000 a year earlier. But there were just 4,000 basic cable subscribers — down from 20,000 a year earlier. REUTERS

Gaza truce studied

Israel and Hamas studied an Egyptian proposal for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip yesterday that won instant backing from the U.S. and Europe, hours after Israeli shells killed 42 Palestinians at a UN school.

However, Israeli officials also said a major escalation of their 12-day-old offensive would be discussed. Troops would be pushed inside Gaza's cities and refugee camps in a bid to end rocket salvoes into Israel by Islamist militants.

The Israeli army accused Hamas of using civilians as "human shields" in an attack that wounded dozens, and said its troops had fired at the school after gunmen mortared their positions from inside.

U.S. president-elect Barack Obama broke his silence yesterday on the crisis, saying civilian deaths were "a source of deep concern" for him. REUTERS

Aid corridor

- Israel said yesterday it will set up a "humanitarian corridor" to allow Gazans periodic access to vital goods.

Inaugural style made easy online

POLITICS A website launched last month allows women to register which gown they will wear to dozens of dinners and balls being held in conjunction with Barack Obama's swearing in as the next U.S. president.

Founder Andrew Jones said he got the idea for dressregistry.com from his more fashion-conscious wife. REUTERS

Foundation Skills Assessment:

What **parents** need to **know**

Foundation Skills Assessment testing doesn't help students learn or teachers teach. Instead, FSA results are used by the Fraser Institute for American-style ranking of schools that only erodes confidence in public education.

Teachers teach their students everyday. We care passionately about their success. We believe in regular assessment and testing, and working with parents to improve learning.

With so much to learn and so many challenges facing our children, why is the provincial government wasting valuable classroom time on a discredited approach to testing?

If the government really wants to improve student achievement, they should keep their promise to reduce class size and improve support for students with special needs.

When will they **learn?**

Kids matter Teachers care

A message from BC's teachers

To find out more about FSAs, talk to your child's teacher or visit bctf.ca

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Comment & Views

Comment

Give banks some credit

Despite war of words, stats show loans are still flowing

MoneyMatters

Charles Davies
Veteran Business Writer

Even the Bank of Canada admitted in its December financial system review that "credit growth ... has generally been sustained throughout the crisis."

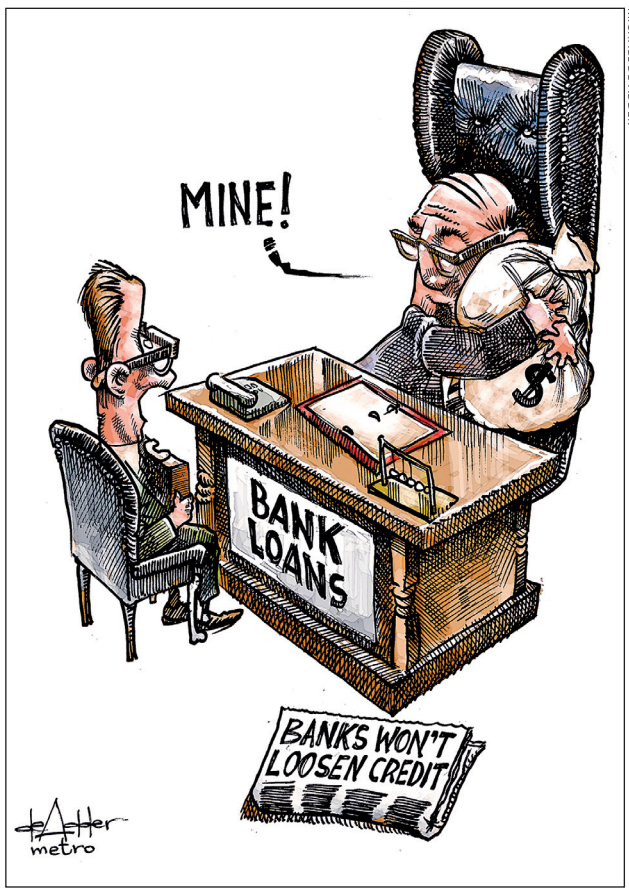
As a onetime inmate of the Canadian banking system, I can tell you from first-hand experience that bankers are prone to excesses and lapses in judgement. The bank I worked for — one of the Big Five — has long had an eerie proficiency at messing up, finding itself covered in goo after the bursting of every financial bubble in recent decades. Banks are also the institutions we love to hate. We may need them, but there's always that sense that, like the unreconstructed Scrooge, they are gouging us.

But are they turning us away in our hour of economic crisis? If you believe Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney, the banks are shutting off the lending taps just when we need credit most. The banks are charged with sopping up the liquidity that Ottawa and the Bank of Canada has provided to stimulate lending and using it to strengthen their own balance sheets. A war of words has been waged between the two sides since early December, and this week Flaherty and Carney called top bankers in for a meeting to apply direct pressure.

On the evidence, Flaherty and Carney don't have much of a case. Using the Bank of Canada's own statistics, Toronto-Dominion Bank argued recently that loans have kept flowing through the crisis. From September to November, household credit was up more than 12 per cent year to year while business credit rose 13.4 per cent — hardly suggesting a credit squeeze. It's also been noted that Canadian banks made up some of the difference as foreign banks and auto financing arms fled the market. Even the Bank of Canada admitted in its December financial system review that "credit growth ... has generally been sustained throughout the crisis."

Banks could be forgiven if they were a whole lot tighter. Ironically, Ottawa's bank regulator, the Office of Superintendent of Financial Institutions, has been signalling that it may raise regulatory capital requirements this year, a good reason to hoard cash. Besides, in a weak economy, banks normally become more scrupulous lenders and boost reserves because there's a greater likelihood of loan defaults. That's only prudent, given that the banks' first responsibility is to assure viable operations in order to protect depositors' funds. Staying healthy also helps preserve shareholder value which affects a majority of Canadians who, directly or indirectly, own bank stock. What's good for them is at least partly what's good for most of us.

Charles Davies is a veteran business writer and editor who has worked for news organizations and publications including Business Week, Canadian Business, Report On Business magazine, Reuters, and Financial Post.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

Lives cut short in Gaza

The Israelis have been bombing the Gaza Strip continuously and at such a rapid rate that everyone is just in utter shock.

How can they even think about dropping bombs and missiles on these innocent people, especially the children?

These children still haven't had a chance to see anything in the world.

EMAN KADRI, CALGARY

Word on the street: What's your new year's resolution — and have you already broken it?

Jessica Lin
age 27, Vancouver
A: To not make any mistakes at work. I have a new job that I started in September and it's really difficult.

Alison Araya
age 30, Vancouver
A: To get my B.C. driver's licence. I've been living here for three years and haven't got it.

Jamie Hunter
age 36, Vancouver
A: To take salsa dancing classes. I've paid my money so I'll have to go. My girlfriend won't let me skip out.

Zach Pipes
age 19, Calgary
A: I didn't really make any this year. I never went along with it for the last two years I made them ... so what's the point?

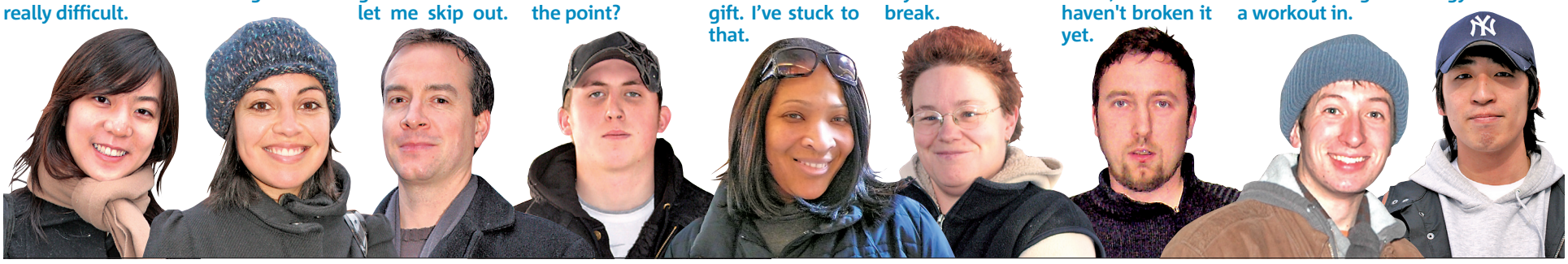
Michelle Richardson
age 36, Ajax, Ont.
A: To save a heck of a lot more than I have in the past. I started over the holidays, putting a limit on each gift. I've stuck to that.

Jen Galligan
age 43, Calgary
A: Mine is to hopefully drop 20 pounds. So far, I'm sticking to it. That's one resolution I can say I didn't break.

Simon Kursa
age 31, Edmonton
A: I wanted to make sure I do yoga or go to the gym at least three times a week, and I haven't broken it yet.

Karl Brook
age 21, Ottawa
A: I haven't broken it yet. My resolution was to work out once a week and I've still got two more days to get a workout in.

Rick Park
age 27, Halifax
A: I'm going to run a marathon. Today, I'm going to the gym with my friends – it's my fourth day at the gym.



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Brees named AP NFL Offensive Player of the Year

New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees won The Associated Press 2008 NFL Offensive Player of the Year award yesterday. Brees threw for 5,069 yards and 34 touchdowns this season, coming up only 15 yards short of Dan Marino's all-time single season record for passing yardage. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Sports

Beckham makes AC debut

David Beckham made his AC Milan debut yesterday in a friendly against Hamburg SV in Dubai. Beckham has joined the Serie A club on short loan from the Los Angeles Galaxy to keep in shape and stay in contention for the England team during the MLS offseason.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Sundin's debut?

Tonight

VS

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The Canucks and Oilers hook up for the fifth time this season with each team winning two of the first four meetings. The Canucks beat the Oilers 6-3 in their only visit to Rexall Place this season, but Edmonton has won four of its last five games on home ice.

RETURN OF THE MATS?: Canucks' fans are holding their breath in anticipation of Mats Sundin's debut, which could come tonight in Edmonton. Sundin said that if all is well after this morning's skate, he'll

lace 'up tonight against the Oilers.

BAR CREDIT: After backstopping the Canucks to points in his first three outings, Jason Labarbera gets his fourth straight start in goal since being acquired from LA. Labarbera is 4-1 with a 1.05 goals-against average and a .966 save percentage in his five career games versus Edmonton.

SCOTT RINTOUL/FOR METRO VANCOUVER

NHL Once bitten?

GETTY IMAGES

Andrew Peters of the Sabres reacts after allegedly being bitten by the Senators' Jarkko Ruutu last night. Peters said after the game that he was bitten, which Ruutu denied. Buffalo won 4-2.

One Lion staying put, one going south?

YorkReport

Marty York

marty.york@metronews.ca

The CFL's first major surprise of the year has come in the first week of the year.

Toronto native Mike Benevides — despite receiving a multi-year head coaching offer that sources figured he would gladly accept from the beleaguered Argonauts — has elected to stay on as the BC Lions' defensive co-ordinator. "Can't figure it out," an Argos source said yesterday. "The guy (Benevides) all but officially signed. We're puzzled. Are we this undesirable?"

- CFLers such as BC defensive lineman Cameron Wake, Edmonton Eskimos offensive lineman Patrick Kabongo and Calgary Stampeders long snapper Pat MacDonald have been impressing NFL types during recent workouts and may be close to bolting to the bigger and better-paying league.

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Daily suffering, part of the job

Curtain Call

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

Death is a terrifying raider for most of us, stealing lives out of the blue, but it's a close colleague for hospital chaplains. From breast-cancer patients dying peacefully as a music therapist plays the harp in a palliative-care unit to the frantic and often futile effort to save lives in intensive care, the end of life is a daily business for people like Buffy Harper.

The staff chaplain at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre in Halifax says her training in theology, philosophy, sociology and psychology helps her gain an important perspective on death.

"We have the training to maybe understand death and dying a little differently than somebody who is just hitting it," Harper says. "There's the acceptance that death is a part of life, though that doesn't make it any easier."

A key part of the job is empathetic listening, mixed with a strong dose of professionalism. "We hear (the suffering) and we feel it, but you know, it's not my mother or my father who's dying," she says. That steady, calm presence can be crucial for the family. "They don't need me to be crying with them."

Harper says the deaths that hit chaplains hard are ones that touch on something raw and familiar in them. Peer support is critical and the chaplains she works with use group prayer, yoga, meditation, tai chi or just talking with each other to get through the rough days. Spiritual strength plays a big role, too.

"It's not the enemy."
Hospital chaplain Buffy Harper on death

"It's not just me doing this: I have faith behind what I do."

You can't be in the middle of all that suffering and not take your blows. Harper vividly recalls a teenage girl committing suicide. She stayed with the family all night as the medical team tried to save her.

"Two days later, I had aches and pains all over my body and I knew that the shock and the trauma of being with that family (had finally) hit me."

So why does she keep going back? Because she can ease the suffering.

"The family is just so grateful that you've stayed with them. You didn't leave because it was uncomfortable," she says. "We see it, we know it's not as traumatic as you tend to think when you only see it once or twice in your life. There is a sense of peace around it.

"It's not the enemy."

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Stating ‘I quit’ doesn’t always mean you quit

WorkplaceLaw

Daniel Lublin
dan@canadaemploymentlawyer.com

Upset after a meeting with her boss, Joey Bru said she was quitting. Believing that she had done just that, Bru’s employer replaced her. But, according to a British Columbia judge, even when employees say they are leaving, they may not have actually quit.

Fifty-nine-year-old Bru worked as a deli clerk for two and a half years at the Kelowna, B.C., based Mediterranean Market. Tensions ran high at the fast paced deli counter and Bru and her colleagues often quarrelled.

Having butted heads with a co-worker on several occasions, Bru was summoned to a meeting by her boss, Cindy Morton, before her shift started in order to try to clear the air. Although the meeting went smoothly, Bru became annoyed and left the deli to go home. She later phoned in to say that she wouldn’t be able to work that day.

Before her next shift, Bru called Morton and in a short conversation told her that she couldn’t take it any longer and that she was quitting. Believing the matter was finished, Morton never asked if Bru was sure she wanted to quit or if she was only voicing her frustration. She simply accepted Bru’s statement and moved on.

The next day, Bru called Morton again to inquire whether she still had a job but was left with the impression she had already been replaced.

Bru later sued for wrongful dismissal stating that she had not quit. Rather, she argued that by interpreting her actions a resignation, the deli had actually dismissed her.

Justice Neill Brown of the British Columbia Supreme Court accepted Bru’s arguments that she had not truly intended to resign but was in an emotional state of upset when she said the words “I quit.”

In finding that Bru had been wrongfully dismissed, he found that the deli failed to consider the surrounding circumstances and instead relied on the pure black letter transcript of what Bru had stated. Morton knew that Bru had been stressed and that it was out of character for her to simply resign. This should have raised a red flag as to whether Bru had unequivocally meant to leave.

Employers can’t ignore the warning signs where an employee blurts out that she no longer wishes to work. By simply accepting what Bru said and moving on, without more, the deli ended the relationship, not Bru.

Where an employee’s resignation is disputed, consider the following questions:

- Is an impulsive resignation out of character for the employee? Or are there any personal circumstances potentially clouding the employee’s decision.
- Did the employee make conflicting statements or demonstrate an intention to continue to work, such as showing up at work the next day or did she evince a clear intention to leave, such as saying goodbye to others?
- Has the employer acted in good faith in accepting the purported resignation or was its acceptance simply an easier way to rid itself of that employee?

A consideration

- When an employee has uttered, “I quit,” have they been asked to take some time to reflect on the situation and confirm his or her intentions in writing?

Daniel A. Lublin is an employment lawyer focusing on the law of dismissal; dan@canadaemploymentlawyer.com.

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In toxicology, the body never lies

Curtain Call

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

When the cause of a death isn't obvious, it's the job of a forensic toxicologist to find the hints that lurk in the fluids of the body.

For a forensic scientist who specializes in toxicology like Gillian Sayer, discovering the truth means lots of time spent in the lab analyzing blood and urine samples for toxins and other external substances that may have contributed to a death. A lethal amount of a drug in the bloodstream can indicate a drug overdose or the presence of alcohol might shed light on why someone took a fatal fall down a simple flight of stairs, for example.

"It gives peace of mind to the family and provides support for the criminal justice system."
Gillian Sayer, forensic scientist

Unlike the flashy, instantaneous results often portrayed on popular forensic television shows — like CSI: NY —Sayer insists work in toxicology is far more methodical, meticulous and time-consuming.

"A big misconception is that analysis takes five minutes. It's a much longer process than that, and our puns aren't nearly as good as on CSI," Sayer joked.

Sayer, 23, works in the Toxicology Section at the Centre of Forensic Sciences in Toronto and says an important aspect of her job is the closure it provides to loved ones.

"I think it's an important service we provide. It gives peace of mind to the family and provides support for the criminal justice system," Sayer said.

Sayer got interested in forensics through the documentaries she watched growing up, like Cold Case Files. She studied Forensic Science at the University of Toronto and secured an internship that placed her at the Centre of Forensic Sciences where she still works today. The internship let her try her hand at forensics and get her foot in the door for a job.

"The internship course got me exposed to the industry — I can't stress how important that was," she said.

Starting out as a forensic technologist who gathered and prepared samples, Sayer now analyzes samples herself as a forensic scientist. She hopes to eventually become a fully qualified toxicologist to report on her own cases and testify in the courtroom. She loves the daily challenge, especially since new drugs and new ways of taking old ones force her to stay current.

"I find the analytical work to be really challenging. Keeping up with what drugs are out there and how people are taking them is crucial. People will always find novel ways to take drugs," Sayer said.

The most satisfying thing about finding a career in the field of forensics, for Sayer, has been proving she can do it.

"I was told once (by an instructor) I wasn't smart enough to get an internship here. I thought, 'I'm going to do it anyway.' If this is something you want to do, then pursue it wholeheartedly," Sayer said.

RAFAEL BRUSILOW/FOR METRO CANADA

Gillian Sayer in one of the labs at the Centre of Forensic Sciences in Toronto.

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New Cadillac at auto show

General Motors announced this week that the 2010 Cadillac SRX will go on display at the 2009 North American International Auto Show in Detroit later this month. The floundering firm is hoping the car's new design and improved features will help it better compete with other luxury rivals.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

AWD returns to Toyota Matrix

LORNE DRURY
for Metro Canada

The second-generation Toyota Matrix brings back all-wheel drive for 2009. The sporty XRS model, shown above, features a 2.4-litre, four-cylinder engine with 158 hp.

The Cambridge, Ont.-built Toyota Matrix begins its second generation in 2009 with the return of the all-wheel drive (AWD) option.

The original Matrix, a hatchback (or crossover as Toyota refers to it) version of the Corolla model, was introduced in February 2002 as a 2003 vehicle.

It became an instant success in North America and last year sold 21,369 units in Canada, making it one of the country's top sellers.

In addition to the reintroduction of the AWD option (it was dropped in 2007), the 2009 model also brings back the sporty XRS model.

The new generation has a lower stance than the previous model, but not at the expense of interior space.

Inside, many changes have been made including redesigned seats for added comfort, the introduction of a three-spoke tilt/telescopic steering wheel and a new console design.

Similar to the Corolla, engine choices are the 1.8-litre and the 2.4-litre, four-cylinder powerplants. Standard is a four-speed manual with an available four-speed automatic. The XR and XRS offer the five-speed manual or an available five-speed automatic, while the AWD comes only with a four-speed automatic.

The AWD system is the same as the one in the RAV4 and works on-demand.

When slippage is detected on the front wheels, up to 45 per cent of the torque can be transferred to the rear wheels to ensure smooth performance.

This was driven home during a short "drag race" demonstration on sand and icy pavement against a front-wheel drive model. The AWD model consistently came out ahead and the absence of wheel spin was noticeable.

The Matrix has a MacPherson strut front suspension with a torsion-beam at the rear on all but the AWD and XRS. For these two models, a double wishbone suspension is offered. All models have four-wheel disc brakes with an anti-lock braking system (ABS), electronic brake-force distribution (EBD) and brake assist (BA).

Vehicle stability control and traction control are available on the XR and standard on the XRS.

Four trim levels are offered: Base, XR, AWD and XRS.

All models come with six air bags plus an all-new active headrest system for front seat passengers. In the event of a rear impact, the active headrests move up and forward to better support the head and prevent whiplash injury.

During a short time behind the wheel of a base Matrix and the sporty XR model, I found them to be comfortable, quiet and pleasant to drive. I hope to soon get a chance to spend a week with an XRS model and I'll report back more driving impressions at that time.

I love hatchbacks and thus the Matrix wins my vote over the Corolla. It has sportier looks and driving dynamics and this is a model that is likely to pick up some of the younger customers Toyota is aiming for with its redesign.

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Frommers' list of top destinations for 2009, which focuses on places that are affordable and interesting, is led by Washington, D.C.; the guide notes that almost every major attraction the city has to offer is free. REUTERS

Travel

Shaky future

The news that Waterford Wedgwood PLC, the makers of crystal and china, filed for bankruptcy protection this week leaves not only the future of employees and several venerable brands up in the air, but also the viability of one of Ireland's top tourist attractions. Visitors flocked to the firm's crystal plant in Waterford, southeast Ireland, to watch glassblowers and other master craftsmen ply their trade; waterfordvisitorcentre.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

TRAVELDESK@METRONEWS.CA

Chernobyl's ghostly remnants

The site of an infamous power plant may not be a likely place to spend your vacation but every year, curious tourists make their way to Chernobyl for a look at where the world's worst nuclear disaster took place.

On Apr. 26, 1986, at 1:23 a.m., reactor No. 4 exploded, releasing nearly nine tons of radioactive material into the environment. That's 90 times as much as the Hiroshima bomb. It contaminated the air, soil and water in parts of Ukraine, Belarus, Poland and Russia.

There are disputes surrounding the number of deaths the accident caused. The World Health Organization reports that fewer than 50 deaths can be directly attributed to that day, and predicts some 4,000 people could eventually die of radiation exposure released in the melt down. Greenpeace contends that the eventual fatalities will be closer to 93,000.

However, the contaminated zones are apparently safe enough for tourists to visit. (I'm not entirely convinced, I suppose I'll know for sure if I start glowing green.) There are several Kiev-based tour agencies that offer all-inclusive day trips to Chernobyl.

My own trip to the site began with a 120-kilometre drive from Kiev, to an area near the reactor called the exclusion zone. I presented my passport at a series of checkpoints, got a safety briefing, signed a waiver and drove through a deserted area.

Despite high levels of radiation, everything looked normal. The grass was a healthy shade of green, trees were full and leafy, bees were pollinating. Nature has been resilient — or it appears so, at any raate.

I hopped out of the van and stood in front of the infamous reactor. It was incredible how close I could get, considering there's still radioactive sludge brewing inside.

My Geiger counter was reading off the charts near patches of moss on the ground. Since the moss is soaked with radiation, tourists are warned against touching or standing on any clumps.

Julia Dimon stands in front of Chernobyl's reactor No. 4, and takes a reading on her Geiger counter.

No eating, drinking or smoking either — although the tour group did end up drinking vodka with a guide who claimed it would protect against radiation poisoning.

Next was a visit to Pripyat, a town three kilometres away from the reactor, from which 45,000 people were evacuated following the disaster. Walking around this abandoned city, I felt as if I were the last woman on earth. It was post-apocalyptic. Wilderness had taken over, dominating cement structures, causing them to crumble and crack like Roman ruins. Weeds pushed through floor boards and branches overtook ex-apartments.

Rusted cribs and burnt dolls were scattered around a former preschool. With school books strewn around the room and black boards still fresh with chalky arithmetic, the scene was a time capsule of Soviet-era life.

An amusement park, set to open the day after the nuclear explosion, was just a graveyard of rusting bumper cars and a lone ferris wheel. The scariest part of the tour was learning that the "sarcophagus," a concrete-and-steel shell built to contain Reactor No. 4's radioactive spew, is leaking. Our guide warned, that if the proper measurements aren't taken in the next few years to rebuild this deteriorating shelter, there's a real risk of a more severe Chernobyl-type disaster happening again.

Julia Dimon is co-host of Word Travels, airing on OLN, and editor of thetraveljunkie.ca.

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Polanski wants sex case moved from Los Angeles
Roman Polanski, who last month moved to have a decades-old charge of unlawful intercourse with a minor dismissed, filed a motion this week to have the entire case removed from the Los Angeles Superior Court system and handed to the California Judicial Council for review. **EONLINE.COM**

Entertainment

Celebrity split
Medium star Patricia Arquette has filed for divorce from her husband of more than two years, actor Thomas Jane, Los Angeles court papers filed Monday reveal. **PEOPLE.COM**

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Scientology says Travolta's spirit is immortal

Jett Travolta

John Travolta's son Jett, who died of a seizure last week at age 16, will live on as an immortal spiritual being, according to the beliefs of the Church of Scientology which counts the actor and his wife as prominent supporters.

Jett Travolta is expected to be given a Scientology service this week upon his family's return to their Florida home. An autopsy was performed on Monday, but officials in the Bahamas where he died did not release the results.

Celebrity television show Entertainment Tonight said the body was cremated late on Monday prior to the journey back to Florida, but that could not be immediately confirmed.

Outwardly, a Scientology funeral consists of practices including eulogies, music, and burial or cremation associated with other mainstream religions, a spokesman at the Church of Scientology headquarters in Los Angeles. But Scientologists do not believe in heaven or hell, although a central belief is the idea that individuals have lived before and will live again, Tommy Davis said.

REUTERS

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Rick McGinnis

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Kenya Hunt

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Accents: To fake it or not

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Of all the criticism that Tom Cruise has received for playing a German soldier in his latest thriller Valkyrie, the one that stands out is for his lack of a Bavarian accent.

"It seems to be the point of contention that will not die and frankly if that's the problem (critics) have, I'm happy," stated screenwriter and co-producer Christopher McQuarrie in a recent interview.

"I'd much rather have them attack me than the people in the story."

But that's precisely the point that's unclear — do fake accents detract audiences from the story? While critics have blasted Valkyrie and its use of American, English and German actors speaking in their own dialect as distracting, McQuarrie argues the opposite.

Actors Liev Schreiber, left, and Daniel Craig appear in a scene from the upcoming film Defiance.

"Everybody walking around speaking these German accents, it starts to feel a little bit like a Mel Brooks comedy," said McQuarrie. "We just said, 'It seems to me that this is a human story as much as it is a German story and can we just dispense with the absurdity?'"

Many filmmakers would debate that argument. Director Edward Zwick, who later this month will be releasing Defiance starring Daniel Craig (better known as James Bond), is one. For his drama about a group of war-time Russian resistance fighters, the accent was absolutely necessary.

"We had a cast made of Americans, Australians, English, Lithuanians, Russians and for everyone to speak with a different accent would've been entirely weird to me," Zwick said.

The Blood Diamond director also insists that adopting the native accent in which a film is set isn't just for the benefit of authenticity either.

"I think it might've helped Daniel disappear into the part — some people's perceptions of James Bond and a lot of that (needs to) happen very quickly."

Still, getting it right is imperative. Actors who mangle dialects are vilified by critics. No matter how slick a flick is otherwise, a movie lives and dies by its character's believability.

It causes one to consider: To fake an accent or not to fake an accent, that's the question. For the makers of Valkyrie, the answer comes without regret.

"I'm quite certain that the half of the audience that doesn't have a problem with it would be mocking us now for the outrageous German accents," said McQuarrie, before adding. "I'll take the half that I agree with."

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 1/7/09	251	308	3 CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Just for Laughs		CBC News: the fifth estate (N)		CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	255	358	6 JOY	E! News	The Insider	Knight Rider (N) (CC)		The 35th Annual People's Choice Awards (Same-day Tape)				News (N)
	254	-	8 M	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Omni News: Mandarin Edition		News: Cantonese Edition		Omni News: Punjabi Edition		Metropia
	250	321	9 CTV	etalk (CC)	Hollywood	Law & Order: SVU		Of Murder and Memory (2008) Annabeth Gish. Premiere. (CC)				News (N)
	-	-	10 OMNI	The Daily	Frasier (CC)	Stargate SG-1 "Tin Man"		Third Watch (CC)		Scrubs (CC)	Diya (CC)	New Day
	252	336	11 GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	Bones (PA) (CC)		Bones "Aliens in a Spaceship"		House "Lucky Thirteen" (PA)		News (N)
	256	389	12 VI	Instant Star	TMZ (N) (CC)	Old Christine	Old Christine	Sarah Connor Chronicles		Law & Order "Chattel" (N)		News (CC)
	253	359	13 CITY	Law & Order: SVU		13: Fear Is Real (CC)		Hates Chris	Friends (CC)	I Love Money (CC)		EP Daily
	-	-	14 CW	Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	13: Fear Is Real (CC)		90210 (CC)		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15 CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	Old Christine	Gary Unmarr	The 35th Annual People's Choice Awards (Same-day Tape)				News (N)
	287	379	16 NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	Knight Rider (CC)		Law & Order: SVU		Law & Order "Chattel" (N)		News (N)
	602	568	19 W	Will & Grace	Friends (CC)	Grocery Bag	Grocery Bag	How Clean	Too Posh	Maxed Out (N)	Body Rev	Maxed Out
	288	380	21 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Scrubs (CC)	Scrubs (CC)	20/20 (N) (CC)		Barbara Walters Special (N)		KOMO 4 News
	-	-	23 KVOS	M*A*S*H	Seinfeld	Beetlejuice ★★★ (1988) Michael Keaton, Alec Baldwin.				King	Still Standing	Scrubs (CC)
	291	383	27 PBS	Steves Europe	Travels-Edge	Great Performances Kevin Kline stars as Cyrano de Bergerac. (N) (CC)					From the Top	MI-5 (CC)
	290	382	28 FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Bones (PA) (CC)		Bones "Aliens in a Spaceship"		News (N) (CC)		Family Guy
	-	364	43 PBS	Performances	TBA	Keeping Up	Being Served	Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		Great Performances (CC)	
	296	654	64 SBK	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	Punk'd (CC)	South Park	Cheers (CC)	Half & Half	The Insider	Entertainment	Paid Program
	298	653	65 TLA	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	13: Fear Is Real (CC)		90210 (CC)		KTLA Prime News (CC)		Friends (CC)
	295	651	66 WGN	WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		Family Guy	Two/Half Men	According-Jim	Sex and-City	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	My Wife-Kids
	297	652	67 WPX	PIX News at Ten Tong. (N)		Two/Half Men	Friends (CC)	Sex and-City	According-Jim	Bring Wall St	Frasier (CC)	Odd Couple
	199	311	76 STR	News (N)	News		Late Show-Letterman		(:37) Kitchen Nightmares		Late Late Show	
news	502	390	26 NW	Fast Food Junkies (CC)		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		Fast Food Junkies (CC)		National
	500	500	33 CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	22 RSP	NHL Hockey Vancouver Canucks at Edmonton Oilers. (Subject to Blackout)					Sportsnet	Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30 TSN	SportsCentre (Live) (CC)			Off the Record	Heads-Up Poker Champ.		Rodeo: PRCA National Finals		SportsCentre
	411	457	49 OLN	Bounty Hunter	Dakar Rally	Survivorman (CC)		Mantracker Jesse and Nathan.		Bounty Hunter	Dakar Rally	Survivorman
	410	403	54 SCR	NBA Basketball: Heat at Nuggets			Score Tonight		Hardcore Hockey Talk		Final Score	Final Score
	417	406	55 SC	Wrecked	Wrecked	Pinks	Pass Time	Am. Thunder	Am. Thunder	Pinks	Pinks Out	Wrecked
	416	409	144 GLF	(6:00) Fútbol Amistoso		Gol TV News		Art of Football	Art of Football	Paid Program	Art of Football	Gol TV News
family	552	543	25 YTV	Scorpion	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Adrenaline	Prank Patrol	Falcon Beach (CC)		Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50 TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6teen (CC)	6teen (CC)	Misadventures	Futurama	The Critic	Chicken	Bromwell High
	557	541	51 FAM	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	553	546	56 TRE	Big Comfy	Rolie Polie	Max & Ruby	Babar (CC)	Backyard	Dora-Explorer	Go, Diego, Go!	Franklin	Big Comfy
cable variety	268	354	5 KNO	Into the Wild	Meerkat	Dragon Sons, Phoenix		Voices of God (CC)		One Thousand		Montreal Jazz
	575	583	20 CMT	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Fortune's Favour		Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Reba (CC)	Reba (CC)	Hope & Faith
	570	580	24 MM	So You Think You Can Dance		PunchMuch		Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	disBand	Born to Be	Spotlight
	600	564	29 H&G	Hid Potential	Really Big Flip	Holmes on Homes (CC)		Property	Unsellable	Mansions	Property Shop	Hid Potential
	615	520	31 A&E	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Dog the Bounty Hunter (CC)		Dog the Bounty Hunter (CC)		Parking Wars
	628	584	32 SPKE	UFC's Ultimate Fight Night		UFC Unleashed		CSI: NY "Cold Reveal" (CC)		Unsolved Mysteries		Mysteries
	521	560	34 TLC	Personal Justice "Episode 1"		Extreme Forensics (CC)		Solved "Broken Vows" (CC)		Personal Justice "Episode 1"		Mystery Diag.
	616	522	39 SHO	The Outer Limits (CC)		About a Girl	About a Girl	The Guard (CC)		Big Love "Damage Control"		House "Ugly"
	620	523	40 BVO	Três Portugal	Art is a Mirror	Law & Order (CC)		Without a Trace (CC)		Fatherland ★★ (1994) Rutger Hauer. (CC)		
	601	562	41 SLC	Filthy Rich: Cattle Drive		ET Canada	Matchmaker	Real Housewives of OC		Trading Spouses		Biggest Loser
	520	505	42 DIS	Mayday		Daily Planet (CC)		MythBusters "Pirates 2!"		Dirty Jobs (CC)		Mayday
	522	506	44 HIS	NCIS "Hiatus" (CC)		Cities of the Underworld		The Real Da Vinci Code		NCIS "Hiatus" (CC)		Unlocking
	627	528	45 SPC	Rabbit Fall	Rabbit Fall	Stargate SG-1 "Spirits" (CC)		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Star Trek: Deep Space Nine		Star Trek: Ent.
	294	650	47 TBS	Meet-Browns	Meet-Browns	House-Payne	House-Payne	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	The Perfect Score ★★ (2004, Comedy) (CC)		
	619	525	48 TROP	Reality	Ad Persuasion	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
	603	561	52 FN	Top Chef "Focus Group" (N)		Restaurant Makeover (CC)		Challenge "Dr. Seuss Cakes"		Iron Chef America		Top Chef
	626	547	57 COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs (CC)		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Comedy Inc.	RENO 911!	Daily Show
	320	621	60 CEN	(6:30) Let's Go to Prison ★		Dexter "Our Father" (CC)		Californication	Hannibal Rising ★★ (2007) Gaspard Ulliel, Gong Li. (CC)			
	581	566	101 MTV	The Real World "Brooklyn"		MTV Live	After	Next (CC)	Parent Control	The Real World "Brooklyn"		MTV Live
	261	394	102 V	John and Yoko: Peace		Poltergeist: The Legacy		On the Waterfront ★★★★ (1954) Marlon Brando. (CC)				Paid Program
	-	-	109 MUL	Matchmaker	Mom's-Upset	Van. Nights	Iranian Pop	Sabor Latino		Sabor Musical	Travel TV	Patrol World

critics' corner

The 35th Annual People's Choice Awards
You picked them; now watch them collect their prizes. As the name makes clear, fan votes determine the winners of these awards, which cover movies, music and television. Acting nominees include Kate Hudson, Anne Hathaway, Will Smith, Hugh Laurie and the late Heath Ledger. Up for honors in the music categories are Rihanna, Alicia Keys, Carrie Underwood, Chris Brown and more. Queen Latifah - a nominee for favorite leading lady — returns as host. 9 PM on CBS

Great Performances
You don't have to be a student of French theater to know Cyrano de Bergerac. The title character of Edmond Rostand's play has become an iconic literary figure up there with Hamlet and Captain Ahab. This production, which had a limited run on Broadway about a year ago, stars Kevin Kline as the warrior with the big nose and the way with words. Daniel Sunjata ("Rescue Me") plays Christian, who uses those words to woo the lovely Roxane (Jennifer Garner). 8 PM on PBS

Leona puts on writer's hat

Leona Lewis is to publish her autobiography. The Bleeding Love singer, 23, has signed a book deal with Hodder and Stoughton to reveal the story of her rise to worldwide fame. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Celebrity Buzz

Lindsay denies breakup rumours

RELATIONSHIP Lindsay Lohan strongly denied media reports she has split with Samantha Ronson, people.com reports. In a MySpace Celebrity Blog posting under "rumors," the actress writes, "Little piece of TRUE information: We did NOT break up!"

Lohan, 22, tells media outlets reporting the split, "Get your stories straight please. It's really annoying to have all of your friends emailing you saying, i saw, i read, etc ... NOT TRUE."

She signs the post with a happy face and "xoxox Lindsay," people.com adds.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Kate overjoyed for ex Armstrong

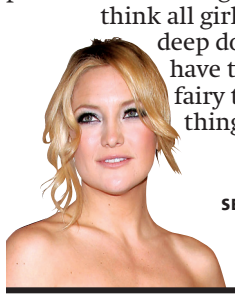
PEOPLE Kate Hudson couldn't be more thrilled for former fling Lance Armstrong, who is expecting a child with girlfriend Anna Hansen, usmagazine.com reports.

Asked if she's happy for her ex, she told the website at the Bride Wars premiere in New York, "Of course! Oh, yeah!"

Hudson also said her new comedy hasn't made her want to wed again. (In 2006 she split from ex-husband Chris Robinson.)

But she says the idea of a dream wedding still appeals to her: "I'm a girl. I think all girls, deep down, have that fairy tale thing."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Amy's holiday fling?

PEOPLE For a change of pace, Amy Winehouse is looking fit in 2009 as she enjoys the Caribbean sunshine alongside a sporty hunk, people.com reports.

The website noted the 25-year-old has been pictured on the arm of former rugby player Joshua Bowman as she continues her vacation in St. Lucia.

Bowman, who is quoted in the U.K.'s Daily Mail saying, "She's just a cool girl, very nice, and we're just very friendly," is said to be on the island with his mother and sister. He is a former player with rugby team Saracens and has since turned to acting.

People.com adds that he said of his new friend, "She's a good laugh — she is such a lovely girl and on great form. I can't say much more than that."

Some reports are calling her friendship with Bowman a "holiday romance."

Winehouse's U.K. rep Chris Goodman is not commenting on Bowman and he cannot confirm some reports that she and her jailed husband Black Fielder-Civil have split. Some people close to her expect them to be together when he leaves jail.

"She has been enjoying herself on her break and meeting lots of new people. There are many like-minded people there having extended breaks. Amy is a friendly person and very sociable and behaving exactly as I would expect her to do," Goodman says.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

'I used to be a hooligan'

PEOPLE Noel Gallagher used to be a soccer hooligan, according to female-first.co.uk.

The Oasis guitarist confessed he went to Manchester City games with notoriously dangerous gangs including Mayne Line Crew, Under-5s and Young Guvnors.

He said: "I knew all that lot and I still see a few of them today. They were quite mad times. Half of us were on the dole.

"The grounds we used to go to 20 years ago were dangerous, especially night games at Leeds and places like that, and wondering whether or not you'd make it home in one piece."

Noel also revealed how his love for sport inspired his music career when he united the crowd in song at the Kippax stand at his team's old ground Maine Road.

The 41-year-old rocker, who played live at the famous stadium at the peak of Oasis' '90s popularity, added to Britain's The Sun newspaper: "I did start a song in the Kippax when I'd had a drink. Probably something like, Everywhere We Go or similar and everyone joined in.

"So maybe the first seeds of my songwriting career were sown at the back of the Kippax." METRO NEWS SERVICES

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Stunts cause Jackman family strife

PEOPLE Hugh Jackman is being held responsible for breaking his brother-in-law's leg, wrist and nose, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

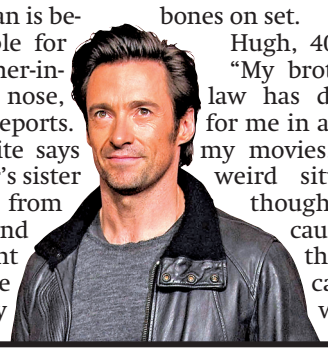
The gossip website says the Australian actor's sister Sonya banned him from using her husband Richard as his stunt double after he broke so many bones on set.

Hugh, 40, said: "My brother-in-law has doubled for me in a few of my movies. It's a weird situation, though, because things can go wrong.

"One time on Van Helsing he was doubling for me in a scene where I got really thrown about. He ended up breaking his leg and I had to phone my sister to explain and say I was sending him home.

"He's cracked his wrist and nose, too. She's not best pleased."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Brit falls prey to Twitter pranksters

PEOPLE Britney Spears has been targeted by online pranksters who have crudely mocked her private parts, female-first.co.uk reports. The Womanizer singer was left red-faced when the upsetting message was posted on her account on networking site Twitter.

Twitter officials were quick to take down the offensive message, and insist they are working to make Twitter more secure, the gossip site says.

A notice on the site read: "A number of high-profile Twitter accounts were compromised this morning, and fake/spam updates were sent on their behalf. We have identified the cause and blocked it. We are working to restore compromised accounts."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Smokes and drinks for unpregnant Moss

PEOPLE Kate Moss seems to have put an end to rumours that she is pregnant by smoking and drinking on holiday, female-first.co.uk reports.

The supermodel has been snapped puffing on cigarettes and drinking beer while sunning herself in Thailand with boyfriend Jamie Hince and daughter Lila Grace.

She has however been seen patting her belly and wearing loose fitting clothing leaving onlookers confused but we think it's safe to say she is not with child, female-first.co.uk adds.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Cowell helps singer Cole

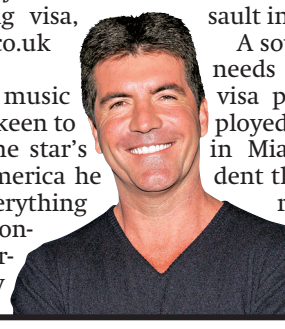
PEOPLE Simon Cowell has hired a team of top lawyers to help get Girls Aloud singer Cheryl Cole a U.S. working visa, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The music mogul is so keen to kick start the star's career in America he is doing everything he can to convince authorities to allow her to sing in the country.

Cheryl has struggled to obtain essential paperwork after being convicted of assault in 2003.

A source said: "He just needs to iron out her visa problem. He's employed a firm of experts in Miami and is confident they will be able to reach some kind of arrangement."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



The Weather Network 20 YEARS
©The Weather Network 2008

Today 80% Rain 9°/ 1°

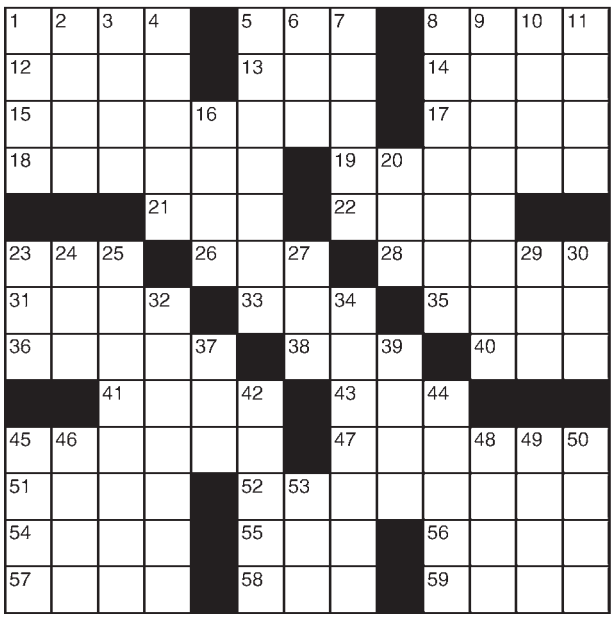
Thursday 40% Showers 7° / 0°

Friday 60% Rain and snow 3° / 2°

WeatherEye... Free App Available on iPhone. The Weather Network

For more delicious Metro recipes, visit: **metronews.ca/food**

Take Five



Crossword across

1 Basilica section
5 Chart
8 Pinnacle
12 Like some dorms
13 Lamb's dam
14 Gunky stuff
15 Trouble
17 Low-voiced woman
18 Seinfeld role
19 Skips a phoneme
21 Neither mate
22 Galvanization matter
23 Bonfire residue
26 Bottom line
28 "The Lord is my shepherd, ..." e.g.
31 Italy's silhouette
33 Party bowlful
35 Despot
36 Contestant's postcard
38 Glutton
40 Type squares
41 Sought restitution
43 Chic, to Austin Powers
45 Antiknock rating
47 Blood fluids
51 Avoid at all costs
52 Loss of courage
54 Took a powder
55 Citric beverage
56 Unravel
57 Dispatches, mob-style
58 "Of course"
59 Harvard rival

Crossword down

1 Rue the run
2 Motel amenity
3 — good example
4 Buzz Aldrin's real name
5 Preprinted, as postage
6 Shock partner
7 Actress Rosie
8 Opposing
9 Unsolved mystery
10 Speck
11 Grand verse
16 Unsigned (Abbr.)
20 Back talk
23 $5 portrait
24 Bart, to Homer
25 Something exceptionally good
27 Gratuity
29 Felon's flight
30 — Doubtfire
32 Those favoring a classless society?
34 Zits
37 Longing
39 Prospector's hope
42 Rot
44 Cartoon duck
45 Scandinavian city
46 Swedish Muppet
48 Antitoxins
49 Repast
50 Eyelid woe
53 Rhyming tribute

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone — one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	7	9	6		8			2
	6	8						5
3			1					
8	3				6			
	2	4				6	5	
			4				1	7
					1			8
4						5	3	
2			3		5	7	9	

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

M	O	T	H	■	S	P	A	■	R	A	Y	S		
A	C	R	E	■	P	A	S	■	O	G	E	E		
S	H	A	M	R	O	C	K	■	C	U	T	E		
T	O	Y	■	I	R	E	■	S	K	E	I	N		
■	■	■	C	O	T	■	W	I	N	■	■	■		
L	I	G	H	T	■	B	O	R	R	O	W	S		
A	V	E	R	■	Y	A	K	■	O	B	O	E		
D	E	N	I	Z	E	N	■	F	L	I	N	T		
■	■	■	S	A	W	■	N	I	L	■	■	■		
S	H	A	R	P	■	C	A	N	■	Y	E	S		
N	O	L	O	■	R	O	C	K	W	E	L	L		
O	P	E	C	■	C	A	R	■	A	L	S	O		
W	E	E	K	■	A	L	E	■	G	L	E	E		

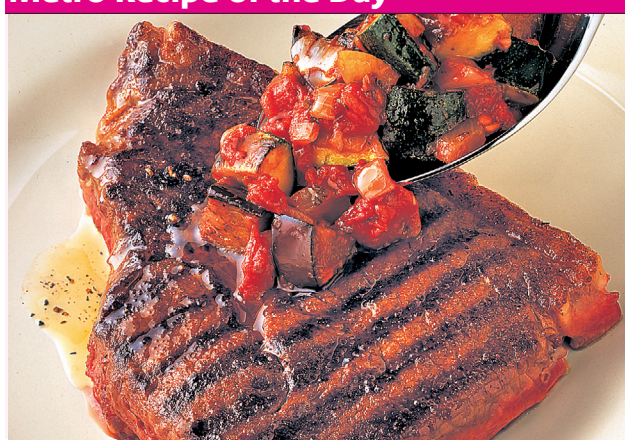
6	5	7	3	2	9	8	4	1
3	9	4	1	6	8	7	5	2
1	8	2	5	4	7	3	9	6
4	2	8	9	1	6	5	3	7
9	7	1	2	3	5	4	6	8
5	3	6	8	7	4	2	1	9
7	6	5	4	8	1	9	2	3
2	1	9	7	5	3	6	8	4
8	4	3	6	9	2	1	7	5

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 min .....Genius
13-17 min.....Scholar
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Spiced steak with speedy ratatouille

INGREDIENTS:

4 tbsp (60 ml) olive oil
3 shallots
2 cloves garlic
1 lb (500 g) zucchini
2/3 lb (300 g) baby, or small, eggplants
1/2 tsp (2 ml) dried thyme
1/2 tsp (2 ml) dried oregano
4 tbsp (60 ml) red wine
1 can (19 oz/540 ml) chopped tomatoes
2 tbsp (25 ml) tomato paste
Salt
1 tsp (5 ml) ground coriander
1 tsp (5 ml) ground cumin
1 tsp (5 ml) ground paprika
1/2 tsp (2 ml) cayenne pepper
4 sirloin or rump steaks, about 6 oz (170 g) each

METHOD:

1. Heat 2 tbsp (25 ml) oil in large saucepan. Peel and chop shallots and garlic, add to the pan, and cook over a moderate heat for 3-4 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, rinse, dry, and trim zucchinis and eggplants and cut into 1/2 in. (1 cm) chunks. Stir into shallots with thyme and oregano, and cook gently for 5 minutes.
3. Add wine, tomatoes and juice, tomato paste and a little salt, then cover and simmer gently for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until vegetables have softened.
4. While ratatouille is cooking, put spices into small bowl, add pinch of salt, and mix together. Season steaks on both sides with spice mixture.
5. Heat remaining olive oil in heavy-based frying pan until faint haze rises, then fry steaks for 4-4 1/2 minutes per side for rare steak, 5 1/2–6 for medium-rare or 6–8 1/2 for well done, depending on meat's thickness. Serve with ratatouille.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Worrying interrupts your work time. You have to please a VIP. A dim-witted man will jump to conclusions.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
A superbly cynical person will fail. Call someone to express your respect. Going through a crisis is exasperating.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Make a good deal with a tough call. It's time to face the truth about indecision. Don't be confrontational with the wrong person.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A simple error creates chaos. Stop chasing an impossible dream. Angry people will be astounded by a strange person.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
You can influence the public. Don't defeat yourself by being naive. A misplaced shoe will waste time.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
You'll appreciate what an older person says. A phobia can be fixed by a professional. You'll make a discovery when everybody talks at once.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Your positive attitude will lift everyone's spirits. A stubborn person will support you. Don't lose your temper due to a quarrel.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
A guilty person avoids punishment again. An unemployed person is shaken by bureaucracy. An informer will come to your rescue.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
An important man is being nagged. An upset friend will make a truce. A complicated argument will make you laugh.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
You might escape from a passionate fascination. A business problem will develop later on. A charismatic person is oblivious to everyone.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Avoid causing resentment in a family. A significant event will be mystifying. Make a decision about a troublemaker.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A committed shopper finds a remarkable bargain. Reassure a fearful person. You can enjoy a fated encounter.

This day in history

JAN. 7, 1610: Galileo Galilei observes the four largest moons of Jupiter for the first time. He named them and in turn the four are called the Galilean moons.
JAN. 7, 1953: President Harry Truman announces that the United States has developed the hydrogen bomb.
JAN. 7, 1959: The United States recognizes the new Cuban government of Fidel Castro.
JAN. 7, 1991: Beginning of the operation Desert Storm, during the Gulf War.
JAN. 7, 199: The impeachment of President Bill Clinton begins.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

WORDY GURDY®

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

1. QB Tarkenton's delivery trucks (1)
2. Tug on a sheep's coat (1)
3. Ruffian's moonshine holders (1)
4. Irritatingly high-pitched grouch (1)
5. One who glimpses a bishop's hat (2)
6. Actor Poitier's bean-shaped organs (2)
7. Pushing for spending lavishly (2)

ANSWERS
1. FRANS VANS 2. PULL WOOL 3. THUGS JUGS 4. SHRILL PILL 5. MITER SIGHTER 6. SIDNEYS KIDNEYS 7. URGING SPLURGING

1-7-09

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10 - 3490 Kingsway

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Crystal Square
Lougheed Mall
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214B - 4501 North Rd.
4711 Kingsway
7531 Market Crossing
111 - 3823 Henning Dr.
204B - 3430 Brighton Ave.

Chilliwack
Cottonwood Mall
103 - 45300 Luckakuck Way
11 - 45905 Yale Rd.
7544B Vedder Rd.

Cloverdale
201 - 17725 64th Ave.

Coquitlam
Coquitlam Centre
101 - 3278 Westwood St.
5 - 3000 Lougheed Hwy.
2700B Barnet Hwy.
22 - 2988 Glen Dr.
2 - 901 Lougheed Hwy.

New Westminster
Royal City Centre

Delta
Scottsdale Mall
7235 120th St.
1517 56th St.

Langley
Walnut Grove Town Centre
Willowbrook Shopping Centre
3 - 19638 Fraser Hwy.
103 - 19700 Langley Bypass
C104 - 20159 88th Ave.
19971 96th Ave.
C7 - 20202 66th Ave.

Maple Ridge
22661 Lougheed Hwy.

Mission
100 - 32670 Lougheed Hwy.
318 - 32555 London Ave.

North Vancouver
Capilano Mall
127 - 1199 Lynn Valley Rd.
1295 Marine Dr.
1748 Lonsdale Ave.
1392 Main St.

Port Moody
202 Newport Dr.

Pitt Meadows
735 - 19800 Lougheed Hwy.

Richmond
Aberdeen Centre
Admiralty Centre Mall
Ironwood Mall
Lansdowne Mall
Parker Place
Richmond Centre
115 - 12571 Bridgeport Rd.

Surrey
Central City Shopping Centre
Guildford Town Centre
201 - 13734 104th Ave.
135 - 12477 88th Ave.
2404 King George Hwy.
1675 128th St.
108 - 7380 King George Hwy.
403 - 15940 Fraser Hwy.
10310A 152nd St.

West Vancouver
Park Royal Shopping Centre
North/South

White Rock
Semiahmoo Shopping Centre
10 - 3189 King George Hwy.

OKANAGAN/NORTHERN BC

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Orchard Park Mall (Kelowna)
Spall Plaza (Kelowna)
Cherry Lane Shopping Centre (Penticton)
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